

# HEART DISEASE

Arizona Department of Corrections  
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program  
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One in every four Americans suffers from some form of cardiovascular disease. Almost half of the 1.5 million heart attack victims in the United States are under age 65. Every 60 seconds someone dies from coronary heart disease, making it the #1 disease killer in the U.S.

Most heart problems are caused by a blockage in the arteries that supply the heart with blood. This restricts the blood flow to the heart and decreases the vital nourishment of oxygen. The decrease in oxygen damages the heart and may cause it to die. Heart disease maybe prevented, even though heredity contributes to the development of the disease. Your lifestyle choices have potentially the greatest effect on whether or not you will develop heart disease.

When making your lifestyle choices you need to:

- Exercise regularly
- Manage your stress load
- DO NOT smoke or chew tobacco
- Manage your weight (keeping it within the "ideal" range)
- Manage your blood pressure
- Follow a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol

**Different Types of Heart Disease:** The most common are:

- Coronary artery disease when the heart does not get enough blood because of a plaque build-up (atherosclerosis)
- Heart muscle disorder (cardiomyopathy)
- Heart valve disease
- High blood pressure

## Treatment

If you have been diagnosed with heart disease, your health care provider will advise you of the proper treatment plan. That may include the following recommendations:

- A low fat, low sodium diet
- An exercise program designed for you
- Medications
- Appropriate lifestyle changes

The sooner you learn to modify your lifestyle and recognize the symptoms of heart disease the greater your chances of increasing your life expectancy with this potentially fatal disease.

**Symptoms of Heart Disease:** Serious heart disease is often accompanied by one of the following symptoms:

- Pain, pressure and tightness in the chest
- Fainting spells
- Persistent, rapid pulse
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing when lying flat
- Pain that radiates to the arm, shoulder, neck or jaw.
- Frequent dry, hacking cough especially when lying down
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Sweating
- Fatigue or weakness
- Swollen feet, ankles or legs.

**IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS, SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY!**